the hesitation and weakness of its majority. We had the whip hand in these meetings, but very soon our influence began to weaken.

In the first days of the revolution the Soviet had decreed the eight-hour workday. A few weeks later the new arrangement was formalized by an agreement between the Soviet representatives and the association of manufacturers. Factory councils were established and employers, scared by the revolution, were ready to make any concessions to the workers. But prices outran wage increases, there was a shortage of almost all goods, and the living conditions of a working family in May or June were no better than in March, when angry crowds had milled about in the streets of Petrograd demanding bread and higher wages. The Bolsheviks exploited this situation and succeeded in inciting strikes, mostly in public services and transport.

Suddenly frictions developed between the workers and soldiers at the front. The reactionary press had opened a campaign aimed to turn the army against the Petrograd workers. It spread the story that the March strikes had been instigated and financed by Germany. The officers at the front told the soldiers that the workers in the capital were loafing and sabotaging defense. Delegates of regiments at the front came to Petrograd to check these charges. They met with a cold and sometimes hostile reception and went back with resentment against the workers. Angry resolutions from the front poured into the Tauride Palace.

Workers in the munitions factories visited by such delegations asked the Executive Committee to do something against the counter-revolutionary propaganda at the front. The first measure was naturally to have a representative of the Executive Committee at the meetings of workers and delegates from the front. A crowd of soldiers would invade a munitions factory at night to check on the work of the night shift. The workers would telephone to the Tauride Palace, the operator would transfer the call to Chkheidze, and the latter would call me with apologies, explaining that there was no reason, of course, for my going to that particular meeting, but, if I were not too tired, my presence there would be a great help. I would drive to the factory, usually at about three o'clock in the morning. All work would have been suspended; the workers would be assembled in the court, nervous and angry, facing grim, suspicious, and often arrogant soldiers. There was no way to find out what kind of delegates they were. They looked like men from the trenches, but usually they had no credentials. My function was not to investigate the charges but to reconcile the two parties, explaining to the workers the source of the soldiers' suspicions of them and making it clear to the soldiers that slanderous rumors about the workers were spread by reactionaries for political purposes.

I felt that the tired, embittered, and angry soldiers were victims of